



# AN ACT

For the better packing of

# BUTTER,

And redress of Abuses therein.



Whereas great complaint hath been made by the Freemen of the City of London, Traders in Butter and Cheese, of many abuses committed in the sale of those Commodities, through the covetous & fraudulent dealing of the Countrey Farmers selling by Stones, Iron-Wedges, peices of Brick, and other unwarranted Weights contrary to Law, and to the great deceit of the Buyer: And whereas the Firkin of Butter hath heretofore time out of minde used to weigh Sixty four pounds (viz.) Of Butter Fifty six pound, and Cask eight pounds, and the Pot of Butter to weigh Twenty pounds (viz.) The Pot Six pounds, and the Butter Fourteen pounds, Now of late years, through the indirect dealing of the said Farmers and Packers of Butter, their Firkins of Butter are made to weigh but Sixty two pounds, Sixty pound, and some but Fifty eight pound, and the Cask seldom less then Ten pound or twelve pound, and sometimes Thirteen or Fourteen pound weight; and their Pots are made generally to weigh Seven pound, and some of them Eight pounds, or Nine pounds weight: And whereas also many other great abuses are by the said Farmers and Packers committed, in putting up of whay Butter, and that which is corrupt, With good Cream Butter, to the spoiling of the good Butter, and to the great damage, not onely of the said Tradersmen, but of all sorts of People that buy and spend the same: And whereas by former Laws and Statutes full remedy is not herein provided; The Parliament taking the premises into serious consideration, and willing to give redress against such abuses, for reformation of the same, and prevention of the like for time to come, have thought fit to Enact and Ordain, and be it by their authority Declared, Enacted and Ordained, That the weighings by Stones, Wedges, Bricks, and other unwarrantable Weights, shall be utterly left, not in any sort to be hereafter used; and that the said Commodities shall be from henceforth sold and weighed with Weights sealed according to the Standard, and that all and every person and persons which shall do and offend against the same, shall forfeit the value of the said Commodity, and the party endamaged shall upon his Complaint be recompenced quadruple to his damage, as in like case is provided in the Statute made in the Twenty seventh year of King Edward the third, for the establishing of one weight, measure and yard throughout the Realm: And be it also Ordained and Enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the Farmer, and all others packing up Butter in Firkins for sale, do from henceforth set upon the Firkin, when the same is seasoned, a visible mark of the just weight of the Tare of the said Firkin; and not put up less then Fifty six pound of neat Butter in every Firkin, nor less then Fourteen pound of neat Butter in each Pot, as anciently hath been accustomed; nor to false pack up their Butter (viz.) old butter with new, or whay or corrupt Butter with Cream Butter: And likewise every Farmer and Packer of Butter into Firkins, upon the sale thereof, do henceforth set the two first Letters of his name, or his own particular mark upon such Firkins, to the intent that if any fraud be, the same may the better be discovered and punished. And be it further Enacted and Ordained by the Authority aforesaid, That every Farmer and Packer up of Butter, not putting up in each Firkin or Pot respectively, such quantities as aforesaid, or offending in false packing as aforesaid, shall forfeit the said Commodity, or the value thereof; and every offender in not putting their names, or not making such marks as aforesaid, shall for every such offence respectively, forfeit the sum of three shillings and four pence. And be it further Enacted and Ordained by the Authority aforesaid, That all such person and persons whatsoever within England and Wales, that shall pack up Butter for sale in any unlined Cask of greater or lesser quantity, do also set the just weight of the said Cask, after seasoning, visibly upon it, attested with his own particular mark, or the two first Letters of his name, upon the penalty of Three shillings and four pence as aforesaid; and that no person or persons whatsoever, do false pack up their Butter in the said unlined Cask, upon the forfeiture thereof as aforesaid; All which said several offences are to be enquired of, sued for, heard and determined in the Sessions of the Peace for the County, City, Borough, Town or Liberty, or in the Court of Record of the City, Borough, Town or Liberty wherein such offence shall be committed, by Action of Debt, Indictment, Information or Presentment, wherein no Essoyn, Protection, or Wager of Law shall be allowed to the Defendant; and the one half of all the forfeitures shall be to the use of the poor people inhabiting within the City, Borough, Hundred, Town or Liberty where such offence shall be committed from time to time; and the other half thereof to him or them that will sue for the same, besides double costs thereby expended. And to the end that the one half of the said forfeiture limited to the use of the said poor people, may be truly imployed and bestowed upon them, according to the true meaning of this present Act; Be it further Enacted and Ordained, That the Sheriff, Bayliff, or other Officer or person that shall levy or receive any sum or sums of money forfeited and recovered according to this present Act, shall and may by vertue thereof, without further Warrant, deliver the one half of the said sum or sums of money by him or them so levied or received, to some one or more of the Churchwardens and Overseers of the Poor of the same Parish where the same offence shall be committed, to be by them and every of them distributed and bestowed amongst the said poor people, according to the true meaning hereof; who shall have authority by vertue of this present Act, to distribute and bestow the same accordingly; and are to do the same within Twenty days after receipt thereof, upon pain of forfeiture of the double value thereof, to be recovered and imployed as aforesaid. Provided, That every Suit and Information which shall be brought upon this Act, shall be commenced within one year immediately after the offence committed, and not afterwards. Provided also, That this Act shall continue in force from the five and twentieth day of March, One thousand six hundred and fifty, for the space of two years and no longer.

*Die Martis, 12 Martii, 1649.*

Ordered by the Parliament, That this Act be forthwith printed and published.  
*Hen: Scobell, Cleric. Parliamenti.*